

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 12463

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (SCHMIDT, HELMUT), GW, US
SUBJECT: VISIT OF CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT TO WASHINGTON:
A RETROSPECTIVE VIEW

1. STATE SECRETARY KLAUS BOELLING REVIEWED THE SCHMIDT VISIT WITH EMBOFF AND PERSONALLY REAFFIRMED OFFICIAL VIEW THAT IT WAS AN OUTSTANDING SUCCESS. SAID NOW ENOUGH TIME GONE BY TO GIVE SOME PERSPECTIVE AND IT CONFIRMS FIRST JUDGMENT OF POSITIVE OUTCOME OF THE DAYS IN WASHINGTON. HAD JUST GONE OVER THE TRIP WITH THE CHANCELLOR PRIOR LATTER'S TAKING SOME LEAVE. SAID OPINIONS (REPORTED BELOW) ARE THOSE REINFORCED BY THIS RETROSPECTIVE.

2. BOELLING SAID SCHMIDT DEEPLY IMPRESSED WITH PRESIDENT'S KEENESS, HIS GRASP OF COMPLEX SITUATIONS AND THEIR INTER-RELATION TO OTHERS. VERY MUCH TAKEN BY PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL CHARM AND EASE IN DEALING WITH PEOPLE. SAID SCHMIDT REGARDED FORD AS A DECENT AND HONORABLE MAN, PLEASANT TO DEAL WITH, BUT HE CONSIDERS PRESIDENT CARTER IN A MUCH DIFFERENT CLASS, ONE WHO IS IN A FAR HIGHER BRACKET INTELLECTUALLY AND IN CAPABILITY. SAID SCHMIDT VERY GRATIFIED BY FLEXIBILITY OF TIME
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ELEMENT FOR MEETINGS AND DIRECT, FRIENDLY WAY SUBJECTS WERE DEALT WITH. SCHMIDT NOT ONLY PLEASED, BUT EVEN EMOTIONALLY MOVED BY THE GRACE, WARMTH AND ELEGANCE OF HIS RECEPTION.

3. ACCORDING TO BOELLING A TELEGRAM JUST IN FROM FRG AMBASSADOR VON STADEN IN WHICH LATTER REPORTS HIS OPINION

THAT, FOLLOWING HIS SOUNDINGS IN WASHINGTON, AMERICANS ALSO CONSIDERED SCHMIDT'S VISIT WENT VERY WELL.

4. IN SUM, BOELLING PRACTICALLY EXUDED RELIEF THAT THERE "NOW AGAIN IS UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN US" WHICH VIEW EMBOFF GATHERED IS ALSO THE CHANCELLOR'S.

5. COMMENT: IN VIEW OF INFORMATION FROM ONE JOURNALISTIC SOURCE THAT ON THE RETURN FLIGHT TO BONN SCHMIDT'S OBSERVATIONS ABOUT HIS MEETING WERE NOT AS POSITIVE AS THOSE REPORTED ABOVE, A DOUBLE CHECK WAS MADE WITH OTHERS WITH WHOM THE CHANCELLOR TALKED TO ON THE AIRCRAFT. THOSE SOURCES CONFIRMED WHAT BOELLING HAD SAID. ONE, A SENIOR GERMAN CORRESPONDENT WHO HAS KNOWN SCHMIDT FOR SOME TIME AND HAD PERSONAL DISCUSSIONS WITH HIM ABOUT THE VISIT AS WELL AS AN INTERVIEW SUBSEQUENTLY BROADCAST ON TV, SAID ALL INDICATIONS POINTED TO A VERY SUCCESSFUL MEETING. ACCORDING TO HIM, SCHMIDT LEFT WASHINGTON "OVERWHELMED BY THE PRESIDENT AND FULL OF ADMIRATION." SAID THE CHANCELLOR WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED THAT THE PRESIDENT "WENT OUT OF HIS WAY TO DEEPE THE FRIENDSHIP "BETWEEN THE TWO, AND THAT SCHMIDT CAME AWAY FEELING THE PRESIDENT WAS AN EXTRAORDINARY LEADER WHO GRASPED DIFFICULT PROBLEMS QUICKLY. SAID THAT THE CHANCELLOR MADE NO ALLUSIONS TO "DIFFICULTIES" DURING HIS PRIVATE TALKS WITH THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PRESIDENT, WHICH PROMPTED SOME JOURNALISTS (WHO BELIEVE THERE ARE) TO ASSUME THE PRESIDENT WAS UNDERPLAYING DIFFICULTIES IN ORDER TO FIRM UP THE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP. SOURCE CONCLUDED THAT IF SO "THIS ALSO WAS VERY IMPORTANT." STOESEL

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